



Newsletter

December 2012 – January 2013

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In Other News ...

Events Calendar

Featured Successes

Young Journalist Exchange

Twenty-four young American and Russian journalists participated in a four-week U.S.-Russian Young Media Professionals Exchange Program that placed them in news organizations in Moscow and around the U.S., respectively.

Throughout the November 26 – December 20 exchange, participants maintained a blog and a

Facebook page to chronicle their experiences. The journalists continue to use these social media platforms to communicate and collaborate with each other.



Aaron Sharockman and Ryan Maye Handy at Russian President Putin's press conference at the International Trade Center in Krasnaya Presnya, December 20, 2012

Before returning to their home countries, the Russian and U.S. participants met via digital video conference between Washington, D.C. and Moscow to trade impressions about their experiences. Some observations from the Russian journalists included a comment on the coverage of local news in the U.S. by a participant who was placed at the *Miami Herald*: "I'm really a little bit jealous [of] your

community [and community news coverage] culture, which we don't have in Russia, unfortunately. Maybe this is one of the reasons why our civil society is not so developed yet."

The Exchange program is a product of the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission (BPC) Sub-Working Group on Mass Media, co-chaired by the State Department's Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) Coordinator Dawn McCall and ITAR-TASS Director General Mikhail Gusman. The exchange was made possible by the generous support of the James S. and John L. Knight Foundation, the Moscow Union of Journalists, and the International Center for Journalists.

Agriculture

Agriculture and Trade

On December 3, 2012 in Moscow, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Michael Scuse met with Russian Deputy Minister of Agriculture Oleg Aldoshin to discuss Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO), agricultural trade issues, and cooperation opportunities under the BPC's Agriculture Working Group (AWG).



USDA Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services Michael Scuse (right) meets Russian Deputy Minister of Agriculture Oleg Aldoshin.

Deputy Minister Aldoshin highlighted Russian progress in harmonizing its Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures to comply with WTO rules. He also said food security and rural development continue to be major Russian priorities, specifically programs to develop cattle breeding, horticulture and food processing. Under Secretary Scuse encouraged the Deputy Minister to continue in efforts to implement the WTO/SPS agreement and to use sound science when updating trade rules and regulations. He also noted that trade in livestock between the United States and Russia is important to both countries.

Under Secretary Scuse was joined by several U.S. state agricultural representatives in his delegation. Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture Jim Reese, Idaho Director of Agriculture Celia Gould, Missouri Director of Agriculture Jon Hagler, and North Dakota Commissioner of Agriculture Doug Goehring all traveled with Under Secretary Scuse to Moscow, and highlighted their interest in Russian cattle breeding development programs.

Business Development and Economic Relations

Trade and Investment in Special Zones

On January 15, 2013, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Europe and Eurasia Matthew Murray and other U.S. Commerce Department officials met in Washington, D.C. with visiting executives from Russia's State Corporation for Special Economic Zones (RusSEZ). The RusSEZ executives included CEO Oleg Kostin, Deputy CEO Vadim Dubovik, and Chris Nicholson, recently announced as an independent member of RusSEZ's board of directors.

Mr. Kostin and Mr. Dubik discussed Russia's interest in attracting investment to its 27 specially-designated zones, which include

several types of industrial, technological, port and other areas that offer a range of tax, infrastructure and other incentives to investors. Also participating in the discussion were officials from United States's own Foreign Trade Zone program (administered by the Commerce Department's Import Administration) and the Department's "SelectUSA" program that promotes foreign direct investment in the U.S market. Promoting expansion of mutually beneficial investment in both directions is one of the priorities of the BPC's Business Development and Economic Relations Working Group.

Counternarcotics

Counter narcotics Working Group Holds Seventh Plenary Meeting in Boston

The BPC's Counter narcotics Working Group (CNWG) met in Boston from December 11 – 13, 2013 for their seventh plenary session. The co-chairs, U.S. Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Gil Kerlikowske, and his Russian counterpart, Federal Drug Control Service Director Victor Ivanov signed a document outlining the CNWG's work and agreed on steps forward, such as the exchange of information regarding effective drug treatment and rehabilitation programs.



Directors Kerlikowske and Ivanov

In addition to the updates from the CNWG's Sub-Working Groups, the CNWG delegations received a briefing on the United States' Above the Influence (ATI) national media campaign and a presentation on building drug-free communities from General Arthur Dean, Chairman and CEO of Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America (CADCA). Following the December 12 plenary session of the CNWG at the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library, the co-chairs participated in a moderated discussion at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government highlighting the bilateral cooperation between Directors Kerlikowske and Ivanov in implementing best practices.

The following day, the delegations visited the William J. Ostiguy Recovery High School to learn more about the recovery high school model and its mission to provide a safe, sober, and supportive school environment in which youth in recovery can develop the skills and strengths needed for personal, academic, vocational, and community success. The final activity was a briefing by the Boston Police Department on the daily interaction between federal, state and local law enforcement followed by a live demonstration of boat patrols throughout the Boston dockyards.

Education, Culture, Sports and Media

Virtual Science Challenge

The U.S. – Russia Virtual Science Challenge for Youth welcomed the submission on December 17, 2012 of projects from American and Russian high school students investigating solutions for a pressing global issue: the management of the world's more than 240,000 metric tons of spent nuclear fuel. The goals of the program include promoting cross-cultural cooperation in the sciences among students and teachers in the two countries.

Twenty students from five closed nuclear cities in Russia paired with 20 students in the United States, grouped into five teams, to work collaboratively on their projects investigating basic nuclear physics and nuclear energy. At the end of the program, all teams will come together and present their findings and proposed solutions at a Virtual Science Fair in May 2013.

The Aristocrats Jazz-Rock Primorye

The Aristocrats, a U.S.-based jazz-rock fusion trio visited the Primorye Region in December, as part of the BPC's Education, Culture, Sports, and Media Working Group programming in the Russian Far East. The group, comprised of drummer Marco Minnemann, guitarist Guthrie Govan, and bass guitarist Bryan Beller, filled both Vladivostok and Nakhodka concert halls during their visit.



(L to R) The Aristocrats: guitarist Guthrie Govan, drummer, Marco Minnemann, and bassist Bryan Beller

Marco Minnemann held master classes for female drummers with the Far Eastern State Fishery Academy's marching band. Minnemann then invited marching band drummers to perform with him during the opening number at Vladivostok's Primorye Regional Philharmonic Hall. An exciting, albeit unplanned, highlight of the group's visit came during a 40-minute power outage at one of the band's performances; Marco performed a one-man

drum solo in complete darkness, holding the audience spellbound until power was restored!

The project's tour was made possible thanks to the cooperation and efforts of the U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok, the Primorye Regional Philharmonic Hall, the Primorye Regional administration, and popular music clubs Shiber and Cat'n Clover.

Russian Documentary on U.S. Disability Laws

On December 1, 2013, the St. Petersburg affiliate of the Russian Television Network (RTN) broadcast a documentary on the rights and status of disabled persons in the United States. The reporter and cameramen gathered the materials for the documentary while visiting several cities in the United States, including New York, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta under the aegis of the BPC's Education, Culture, Sports and Media Working Group. The film team recorded interviews with disabled Americans and their advocates, including those in federal, state and local governments, those affiliated with NGOs and those working in the private sector.

The title of the 26-minute long documentary captured its spirit: "People with Unlimited Abilities." It presented an upbeat portrait of the advances America has made in welcoming people with disabilities into schools, offices, stores, cultural institutions, etc. and showcased the supporting roles played by the U.S. legal system, cultural values, and technology.

Lehrer Dance Captivates Thousands in the Russian Far East

On December 21 – 26, twelve American dancers from the Lehrer Dance company gave three performances in Vladivostok and Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy. The project, which took place under the auspices of the

Bilateral Presidential Commission and was sponsored by the U.S. Consulate in Vladivostok, drew over two thousand enthusiastic dance fans.



Lehrer Dance Company

Apart from the concerts and autograph sessions, Jon Lehrer, the company's choreographer and founder, gave a master class and presentation at the Vladivostok American Corner, sharing his experience and skill with Russian dancers.

Teaching Dance in Vladivostok

Drexel University Associate Professor, and hip-hop dancer and choreographer, Moncell "Ill Kozby" Durden, concluded his two month tenure at the "D-Motion" Dance School in December 2012. The courses taught by Professor Durden covered theory and history of dance.

In addition to his daily teaching schedule at the dance school, Mr. Durden engaged local youth through numerous master classes, including a December 15 program for over 40 students, dancers, and dance instructors at the Scientific Library of the Far Eastern Federal University focusing on the history of jazz and hip-hop culture, and a December 22 appearance as a judge at the 22nd "Dance Plane" dance battle, which drew nearly 600 young dancers and spectators.

Harvard Professor Promotes Educational Reform in Russia

Patricia Graham, professor emerita of Harvard University and one of America's leading historians on education in the United States, visited St. Petersburg from December 5 to 8, 2013 to discuss her latest book, "Schooling America," and to help promote educational reform and cooperation between U.S. and Russian universities.

Among her many activities, Professor Graham spoke at both St. Petersburg State Electro-Technical University and St. Petersburg State Technical University about the American model of combining academic institutions and research centers into single entities that not only train new scientists and engineers, but also foster creativity and innovation and promote solid, often commercially viable, research and development. Professor Graham also spoke at the St. Petersburg English Language Teachers Association's (SPELTA) annual conference and gave a presentation at the St. Petersburg In-Service Training Pedagogical Academy.

Environment

Black Carbon Project in the Arctic

A U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) delegation arrived in Russia on January 28, 2013 for a five-day EPA Arctic Black Carbon Project planning visit to Murmansk and Moscow. Trip objectives include work plan development for the BPC's Environment Working Group, establishment of a technical steering group, and engagement of additional Russian partners. The project aims to identify and inventory black carbon emissions sources in Murmansk as well as to develop pilot projects to reduce black carbon emissions.

In addition to the EPA, participants in the project included the Murmansk State Technical

University, City of Murmansk, the World Wildlife Wide Fund for Nature-Russia, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation, and the Environment, Science, Technology and Health (ESTH) Office of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.

U.S. and Russian Complete Second Phase of Joint Antarctic Inspection

On December 6, 2012, a joint team of eight officials from the United States and the Russian Federation concluded an eight-day inspection of foreign research stations, installations, and equipment in Antarctica.



Joint Team Inspects Belgium's Princess Elisabeth Station

The joint inspection was conducted pursuant to the Antarctic Treaty and its Environmental Protocol and was designed to review compliance with Antarctic Treaty system rules and regulations. This review includes verification that the stations are implementing relevant environmental rules and that facilities are used for peaceful purposes only -- honoring the Treaty's prohibition on measures of a military nature. The U.S. - Russian team inspected Bharati (India), Maitri (India), Princess Elisabeth (Belgium), Syowa (Japan), Troll (Norway) and Zhongshan (China) stations in December, and Concordia (France, Italy) Mario Zucchelli (Italy), and Scott (New Zealand) stations in January.

The inspection effort was facilitated by a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Antarctica signed by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on September 8, 2012.

Bilateral Wildlife Conservation

Embassy Moscow marked Wildlife Conservation Day with an impactful live and online program on wildlife trafficking threats and conservation efforts in Russia. Special guests Polina Zhanova, Coordinator, Program on Specially Protected Areas, World Wildlife Fund, and Nikolay Formozov, Professor, Biology Faculty, Lomonosov Moscow State University briefed attendees on the threats facing Amur tigers, polar bears, hawks, and other species as well as advances in securing their protection through bilateral cooperation in the area of wildlife trafficking.



Wildlife Conservation Day at U.S. Embassy Moscow

Military Technical Cooperation

Military Technical Cooperation Working Group Launched

The Military-Technical Cooperation Working Group (MTCWG) became the newest Working Group in the BPC at a meeting on December 12, 2012 held at the Pentagon. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Evelyn Farkas, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Defense Trade and Regional Security Beth McCormick,

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Eurasian and European Affairs Dan Russell, and Acting Director of International Cooperation (AT&L) Frank Kenlon hosted a delegation led by Anatoly Punchuk, Deputy Director of the Russian Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation for the first meeting of the MTCWG.

The meeting set a positive tone for future cooperation in the military-technical sphere. The meeting preceded a Defense Cooperation Acquisition Forum, during which each delegation provided insight into the policies and business practices of their respective government's acquisition and procurement processes and export control laws.

Science and Technology

Seismology and Geodynamics Agreement

A new and stronger agreement on Cooperation in Seismology and Geodynamics between the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation was signed on December 20, 2012, at the USGS headquarters in Reston, Virginia. Deputy Minister Igor Fedyukin, Russian Ministry of Education and Science, Dr. David Applegate, USGS Associate Director for Natural Hazards, and Dr. Marge Cavanaugh, NSF Acting Assistant Director for Geosciences, signed the agreement. The new agreement strengthens the U.S. – Russia relationship under the BPC's Science and Technology Working Group.

U.S. scientists have a long-standing relationship with Russian scientists in the area of natural hazards including earthquakes, volcanic hazards, tsunamis, and floods. Since 1988, the USGS and NSF have provided support for the maintenance of 12 seismograph stations in Russia, which are a critical part of the Global

Seismographic Network. The stations are operated and maintained by the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS).

One of the Russian seismic stations is designated as a primary station for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and five are designated CTBT auxiliary stations. All the stations provide real-time seismic data for nuclear test ban monitoring, tsunami warning through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, and earthquake monitoring by the USGS National Earthquake Information Center.



(L to R): Dr. Marge Cavanaugh, Associate Director Dr. David Applegate, and Deputy Minister Igor Fedyukin

The new agreement broadens and strengthens seismic monitoring for earthquake notification through access to additional seismic stations, tsunami warning, and general geophysical research performed previously under the Memorandum of Understanding signed on March 24, 1999. The new agreement also facilitates obtaining duty-free and tax-free status for imported equipment and supplies.

Gas Hydrates in the Arctic

USGS Gas Hydrates Project Chief Dr. Carolyn Ruppel and research geologist Dr. Laura Brothers attended a workshop on "Subsea



Permafrost, gas seeps, and gas hydrates in the Arctic — available data and prospective projects” from January 14 – 15, 2013 at the Finnish Meteorological Institute in Helsinki.

The workshop primarily provided a forum for the review and sharing of the extensive geophysical, geochemical, and borehole datasets the Russian scientists have collected in the Russian Arctic, particularly in the Kara and Laptev Seas. These datasets are critical to understanding the potential climate risks posed by methane hydrates currently trapped in subsea permafrost. USGS scientists presented an analysis of seismic data that was used to produce the first-ever regional map of subsea permafrost in the Arctic’s Beaufort Sea basin.

The workshop, conducted in both English and Russian, was organized by Dr. Georgy Cherkashov of the All-Russian Scientific Research Institute for Geology & Mineral Resources of Oceans (VNIIOkeangeologia) Institute in St. Petersburg, and 17 of the 28 participants were representatives of Russian institutes, the Russian Academy of Sciences, or Russian research companies. USGS participation in the workshop was supported by the US Embassy in Moscow as an outcome of a proposal submitted by Ruppel to the BPC’s Science & Technology Working Group.

In Other News...

Arms Control and Nonproliferation Talks

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation Vann Van Diepen led an interagency delegation to Moscow on January 24 and 25, 2013. The delegation met with their Russian counterparts, led by Mr. Aleksandr Deyneko, Deputy Director of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs's Department for Security Affairs and Disarmament, and held wide-ranging discussions covering opportunities for cooperation within the BPC's Arms Control and International Security Working Group, and raised issues of shared concern in the areas of export control and nonproliferation.

Young Diplomats Come to Yekaterinburg

On December 20, 2013 students from Tyumen and Yekaterinburg spent a day as diplomats at the U.S. Consulate in Yekaterinburg. The consulate invited students of law and international affairs from universities in the two cities to work in every aspect of the consulate's diplomatic mission: they prepared news and political briefs, developed a cultural program, interviewed for visas, and learned about diplomatic protocols.

Meet the Editors

The BPC newsletter is coordinated by Moscow-based BPC Coordinator Justin Reynolds, and DC-based BPC Senior Advisor Tracy Perrelli and BPC Advisor David Epstein. In January, the BPC Team and the rest of the Office of Russian Affairs went bowling at the Old Executive Office Building for team building with colleagues at the NSS. To subscribe to the newsletter or to submit feedback please contact Tracy at PerrelliTT@state.gov.



(L to R) Senior BPC Advisor, Tracy Perrelli; Moscow-based BPC Coordinator, Justin Reynolds; BPC Advisor, David Epstein

Farewell to Ambassador Malayan

A special thank you to Ambassador Eduard Malayan for your service as Special Envoy for the U.S. – Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission. Ambassador Malayan brought experience and stability to the Commission working to find areas of increased cooperation between our two nations.



Ambassador Malayan

Best wishes as you assume your new position as the Russian Ambassador to Mexico.



Events Calendar

February 4 – 8

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Russia Program Coordinator will travel to Moscow to outline cooperative wildlife conservation plans for 2013 – 2014.

February 5

The Global/Regional Security Sub-Working Group of the BPC's Defense Relations Working Group will meet February 5 in Geneva, Switzerland.

February 11 – 14

A U.S. FWS representative from Alaska will travel to Yakutsk, Russia to participate in a board meeting of the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group (CAFF).

February 20 – 24

Representatives of the U.S. FWS, NOAA, and various universities and environmental organizations will attend the 40th Annual Meeting of the Pacific Seabird Group.

March 4 – 8

A biennial meeting of Russian and U.S. marine mammal researchers and managers will be held in Seattle, WA at NOAA's National Marine Mammal Laboratory.

March 9

Ty Stephens and SoulJaazz group, Primorye Regional Philharmonic Hall, Vladivostok.

March 11 – 16

An EPA delegation visits the Russian MNRE to share over 40 years experience in implementing Superfund and Brownfields programs.

March 30 and April 6

Andrea Ridilla (oboe) will perform with the Pacific Symphonic Orchestra, Primorye Regional Philharmonic Hall, Vladivostok.

April 5

Concert by Horseshoe at Primorye Regional Philharmonic Hall, Vladivostok

Background on the BPC: In 2009, President Obama and then-President Medvedev created the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission to improve coordination between our countries, identify areas of cooperation, and pursue joint projects and actions that strengthen strategic stability, international security, economic well-being, and the development of ties between the Russian and American peoples. The BPC now consists of 20 working groups and numerous sub-working groups. President Putin and President Obama have both re-affirmed their commitment to the BPC.

Please visit the BPC website:
www.state.gov/russiabpc or contact:
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The BPC's 20 Working Groups are:

•Agriculture •Arms Control and International Security •Business Development and Economic Relations •Counternarcotics •Counterterrorism •Defense Relations •Education, Culture, Sports, and Media •Emergency Situations •Energy •Environment •Health •Innovation •Intelligence •Military Cooperation •Military Technical Cooperation •Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Security •Rule of Law •Science and Technology •Space Cooperation •Steering